

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LUSAKA 01016 160009Z  
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
-----160011Z 100470 /61

O R 152334Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5431  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL CAPETOWN

S E C R E T LUSAKA 1016

EXDIS

CAPETOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1  
TAGS: PFOR ZA RH UK US  
SUBJ: CHONA'S COMMENTS ON OWEN-KAUNDA MEETING

REF: STATE 082018

1. CHONA ASKED ME TO COME TO STATE HOUSE FOR A DISCUSSION OF THE OWEN-KAUNDA MEETING SHORTLY AFTER BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER MILES HAD GIVEN ME HIS REPORT OF IT AND BEFORE CHONA HIMSELF LEFT FOR WASHINGTON. WHILE THE DISCUSSION WITH CHONA CAN HARDLY BE CALLED AN ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING, NEVERTHELESS THE IMPRESSION HE GAVE CORRESPONDED CLOSELY TO MILES' REPORT.

2. ACCORDING TO CHONA, KAUNDA'S PERSONAL REACTION TO OWEN WAS VERY FAVORABLE. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY CAME THROUGH AS AN HONEST AND SINCERE INDIVIDUAL DOING HIS BEST WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION. THE PRESIDENT WISHED HIM WELL AND OFFERED HIS SUPPORT. HE HAD NO PARTICULAR ADVICE TO OFFER. ON REPRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE BY VARIOUS NATIONALIST FACTIONS, CHONA SAID ZAMBIA HAD NO INTENTION OF CHOOSING THE LEADERSHIP OF ZIMBABWE. I

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NOTED THAT THIS POSITIVE ATTITUDE SEEMED TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE TAKEN BY THE MORNING DAILY MAIL EDITORIAL AND JOSHUA NKOMO'S PUBLISHED STATEMENTS FROM PRAGUE AND ASKED WHICH BETTER DESCRIBED THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION. CHONA ACKNOWLEDGED THE DIFFERENCE BUT CONFINED HIMSELF TO EXPLAINING THE REASON FOR THE NEGATIVE ATTITUDE ADOPTED BY NKOMO AS THAT OF ANY NORMAL PERSON WHO HAD GONE THROUGH WHAT HE HAD.

3. CHONA ASKED ME TO EXPLAIN THE OWEN PROPOSAL WHICH HE SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND. I SAID I HAD HOPED TO GET HIS APPRECIATION OF THE PROPOSAL BUT ON HIS INSISTENCE OUTLINED MY UNDERSTANDING OF IT IN GENERAL TERMS ACCORDING TO WHAT IS NOW IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN SUPPLEMENTED BY REFTEL.

4. CHONA ASKED ABOUT DATES, SAYING HE UNDERSTOOD THE BRITISH ARE NOW TALKING ABOUT INDEPENDENCE ON DECEMBER 31, 1978. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD ASKED BOTH OWEN AND GRAHAM THIS QUESTION DURING BREAKS IN THE FORMAL TALKS. THEIR ANSWER HAD BEEN THAT THE PRESENTATION OF LEGISLATION WOULD BEGIN IN NOVEMBER AND LAST THROUGH FEBRUARY, THE ELECTORAL PROCESS WOULD PROBABLY LAST THROUGH SEPTEMBER, AND THUS INDEPENDENCE COULD BE DECLARED ON DECEMBER 31, 1978. HE COULD ONLY CONCLUDE THAT THE BRITISH WERE REALLY ASKING THE AFRICANS TO CARRY ON AND INTENSIFY THE WAR FOR A YEAR AND A HALF. I REPLIED THAT I HAD ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE AFRICANS HAD INSISTED THE WAR EFFORT MUST GO ON WHILE NEGOTIATIONS WERE UNDERWAY. IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING, HOWEVER, THAT AN END OF THE WAR WOULD HAVE TO COME AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. CHONA ASKED WHETHER SMITH WOULD STAY UNTIL THE END. AGAIN I SAID IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT SMITH WOULD NOT PRESIDE OVER THE ELECTION PROCESS. HE ASKED ABOUT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WHICH I SAID WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT BUT IN ANY CASE WOULD OPERATE UNDER GENERAL PRINCIPLES ESTABLISHED IN THE ALREADY AGREED UPON CONSTITUTION.

5. COMMENT: KAUNDA'S REACTION TO OWEN WAS VIRTUALLY THE SAME HE GAVE THE KISSINGER PROPOSALS WHEN THEY WERE PRESENTED TO  
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HIM. I THINK IT UNLIKELY THAT THE PRESIDENT BELIEVES HE HAS GIVEN ANY COMMITMENT TO OWEN. WE CAN EXPECT SOME KIND OF NEW PUBLIC GESTURES IN SUPPORT OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE. THE ZAMBIANS APPEAR CONVINCED THAT THE BEST WAY TO GET FAVORABLE ACTION FROM THE WEST IS TO INTENSIFY THE ARMED STRUGGLE.

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## Message Attributes

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